

VERTIGO



NEW  
STORYLINE

# FABLES™



jj  
4.02

ISSUE 6 WILLINGHAM BUCKINGHAM LEIALOHA  
december 2002

ANIMAL FARM  
SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

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## The Story So Far:

We learned that many characters from the lands of fable and folklore have been hiding out in New York City in an underground community they call *Fabletown*. They're a secret society of refugees from terrible wars, because someone known only as "The Adversary" had methodically invaded and conquered all of their myriad kingdoms, one by one. The Fables--as they call themselves--who cannot pass as human in the city are forced to stay hidden away in the upstate Fabletown annex known as *The Farm*.

Recently, Rose Red and her no-good boyfriend, Jack of the Tales, got caught attempting to fake Rose's murder as part of a scheme to swindle Lord Bluebeard out of a small fortune. Bigby Wolf, the sheriff of Fabletown, earned quite a feather in his cap for solving that one. Snow White, the assistant mayor (and real power behind the throne) sentenced her wayward sister Rose and Jack to many hours of community service, to pay for their crimes. Along the way, Jack was briefly a prince, Prince Charming was briefly a pauper, and many other interesting things occurred.

YES, IT'S "ONCE UPON A TIME" TIME AGAIN.

LISTEN UP, JACK.

BIGBY IS IN TOTAL CHARGE OF YOU WHILE ROSE AND I ARE GONE THIS WEEK. DON'T GIVE HIM ANY TROUBLE.

OH, JACK WON'T GIVE ME ANY TROUBLE, SNOW, OR I'LL JUST KEEP ADDING TO HIS COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS.

YOU CAN'T DO THAT, BIGBY!

TRY ME, MULCHHEAD.

HE CAN AND HE WILL, WITH MY BLESSING. UNTIL YOU WORK OFF THE LAST OF YOUR PUNISHMENT, JACK, YOU BELONG TO US, BODY AND SOUL.

DON'T EVEN TRY TESTING IT, OR DARK JUDGMENT WILL COME DOWN ON YOU LIKE THE WRATH OF GOD ALMIGHTY.

## ROAD TRIP

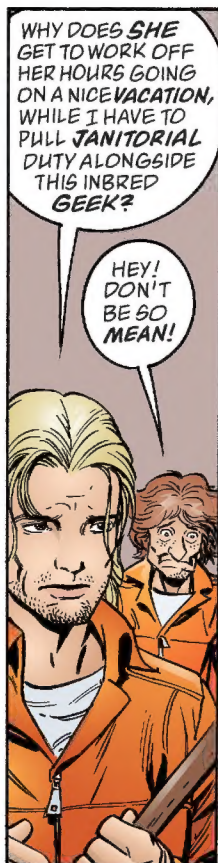
### Part One of Animal Farm

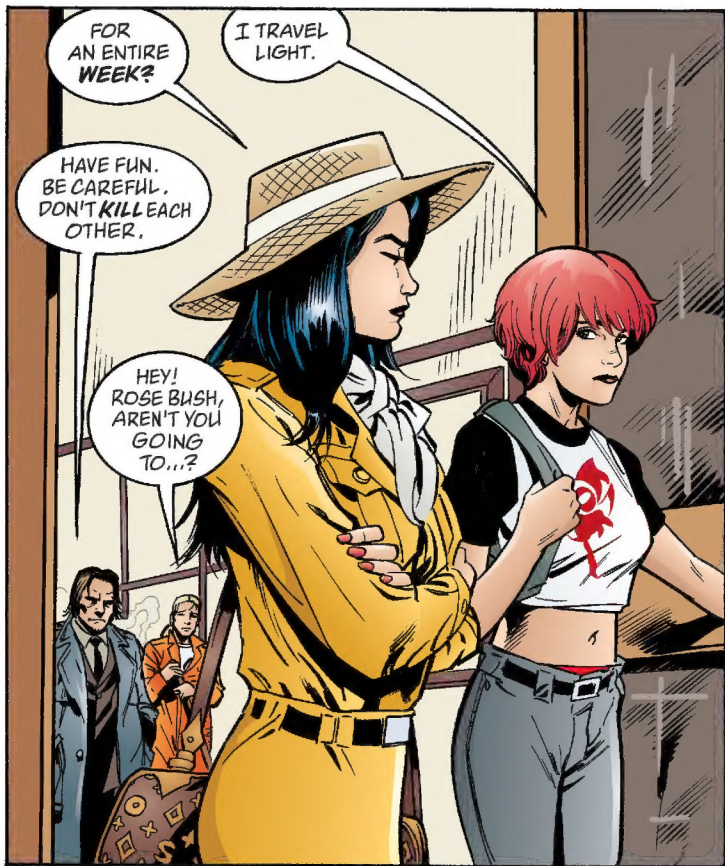
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FABLES is created by Bill Willingham





FOR AN ENTIRE WEEK?

I TRAVEL LIGHT.

HAVE FUN. BE CAREFUL. DON'T KILL EACH OTHER.

HEY! ROSE BUSH, AREN'T YOU GOING TO...?



SHE DIDN'T EVEN SAY **GOODBYE**. SHE ACTED LIKE I WASN'T EVEN **HERE**

THAT'S BECAUSE, FOR ALL OF HER JERKY WAYS, ROSE IS **STILL** A BRIGHT GIRL--SMART ENOUGH TO FINALLY **REALIZE** YOU HAVE THE STINK OF "LOSER" ALL OVER YOU, JACK.



NOW GET BACK TO WORK. AND WHEN YOU'RE **DONE** WITH THIS, STRIP AND WAX THE BALLROOM FLOOR UPSTAIRS. FLYCATCHER IS IN CHARGE.

WHY DOES HE GET TO BE BOSS?

BECAUSE I SAID SO.

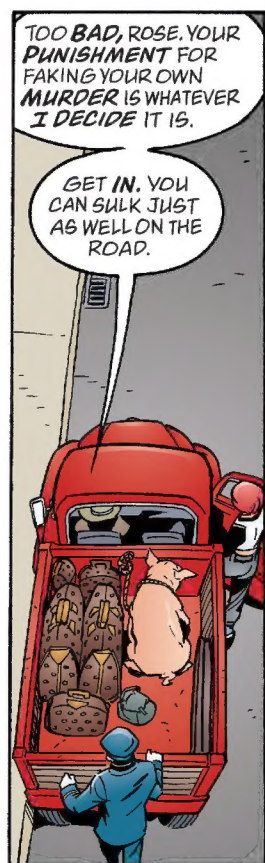
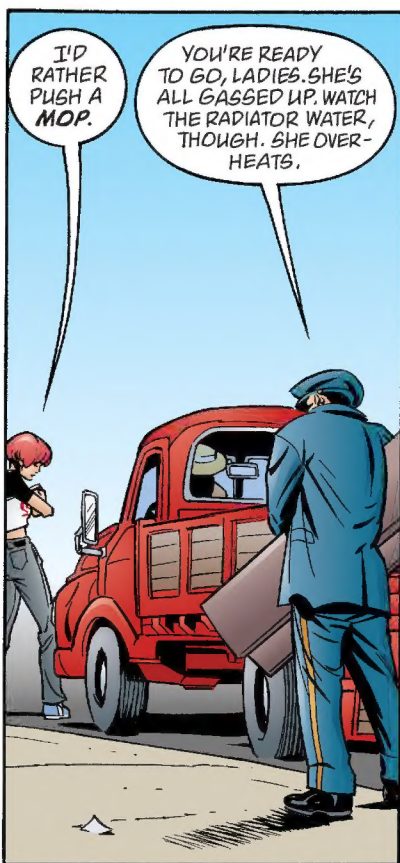
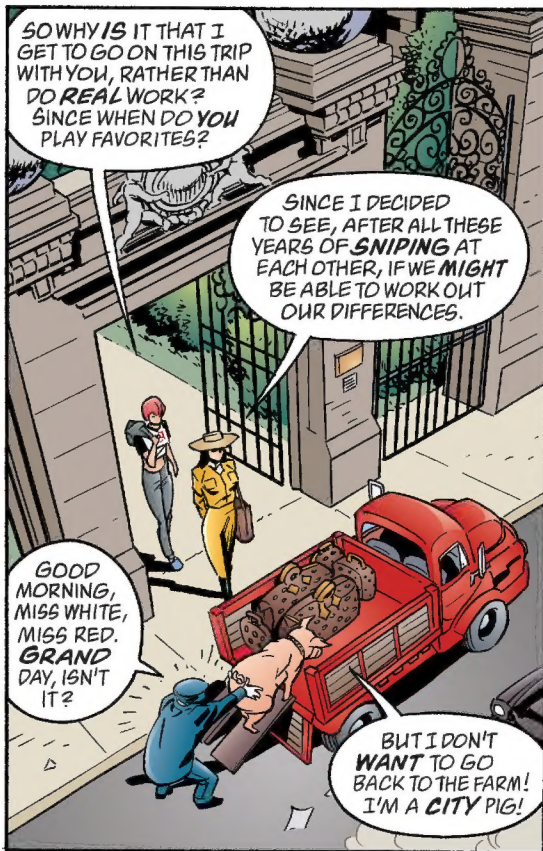


AND I HAVE THE **EXPERIENCE** TO BE BOSS. I DO THIS WORK ALL THE TIME. I **KNOW** WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

WHAT'S **YOUR** STORY ANYWAY, FLY? WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS STUCK ON COMMUNITY SERVICE?



BIGBY KEEPS CATCHING ME EATING FLIES IN **PUBLIC**. IT'S NOT MANY HOURS' PUNISHMENT FOR EACH OFFENSE, BUT IT ADDS **UP**.





HAVE A GOOD TIME!

THIS IS GOING TO SUCK.



YOU MIGHT AS WELL TRY TO ENJOY THIS, ROSE, BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF IT. TWICE A YEAR I HAVE TO GO UPSTATE TO CHECK ON THE FABLE COMMUNITY AT THE FARM. IT'S NOT A VACATION. IT'S WORK. AND YOU'RE GOING TO HELP.



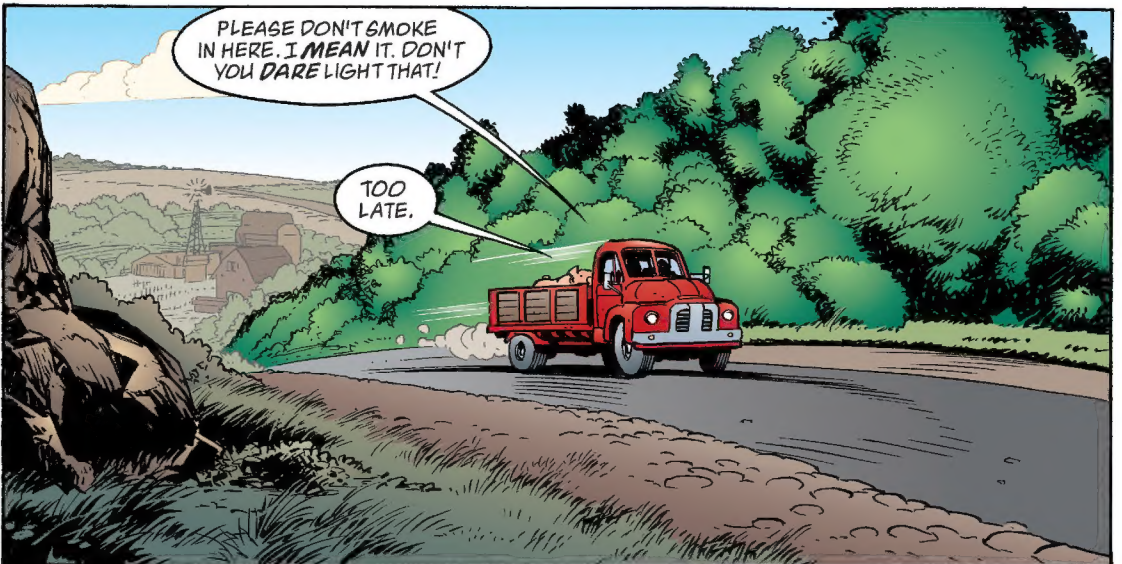
YOU CAN BE HAPPY OR MISERABLE, BUT BY GOD YOU'LL STILL DO THE WORK.

ALBANY



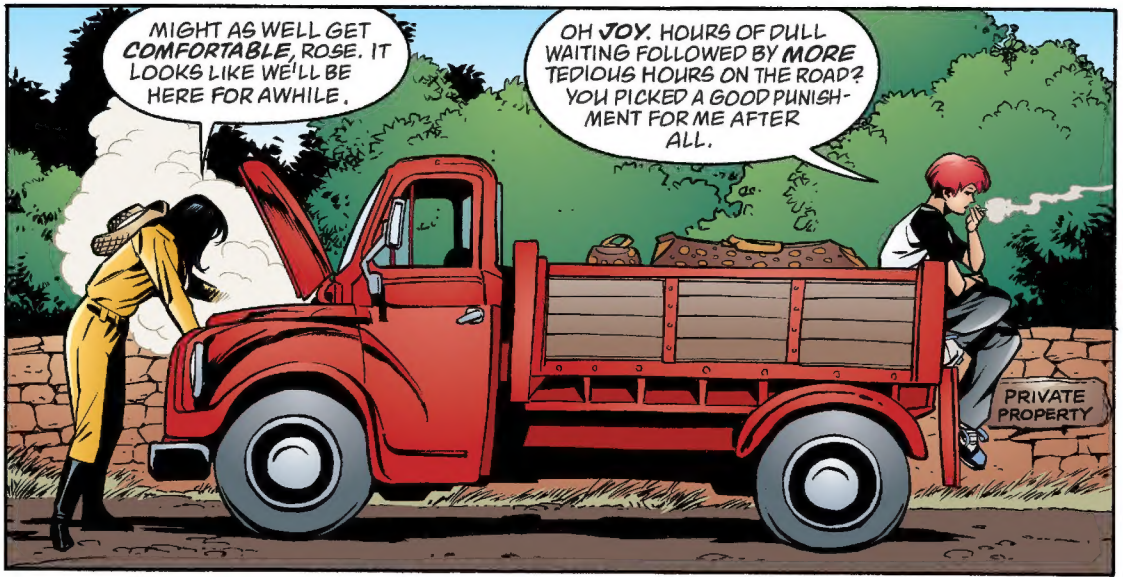
WHERE ARE WE?

ARE WE THERE YET?



PLEASE DON'T SMOKE IN HERE. I MEAN IT. DON'T YOU DARE LIGHT THAT!

TOO LATE.



MIGHT AS WELL GET COMFORTABLE, ROSE. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'LL BE HERE FOR AWHILE.

OH JOY. HOURS OF DULL WAITING FOLLOWED BY MORE TEDIOUS HOURS ON THE ROAD? YOU PICKED A GOOD PUNISHMENT FOR ME AFTER ALL.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

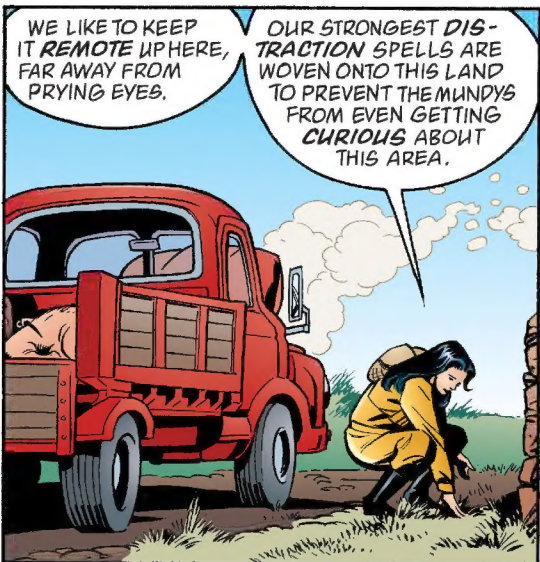


HOW MUCH LONGER UNTIL WE REACH YOUR DAMNED FARM?



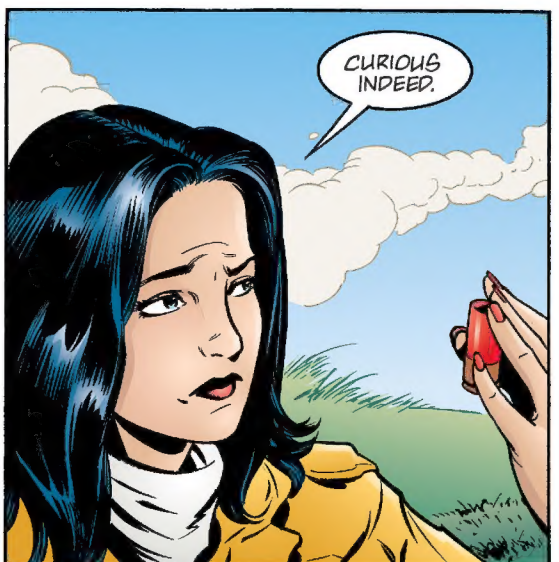
ARE YOU KIDDING ME? IN ALL THE YEARS -- CENTURIES -- WE'VE LIVED HERE IN NEW YORK, YOU'VE NEVER ONCE BOTHERED TO VISIT THE UPSTATE COMMUNITY?

WE'VE BEEN ON THE FARM'S LAND FOR THE PAST TWENTY MILES.

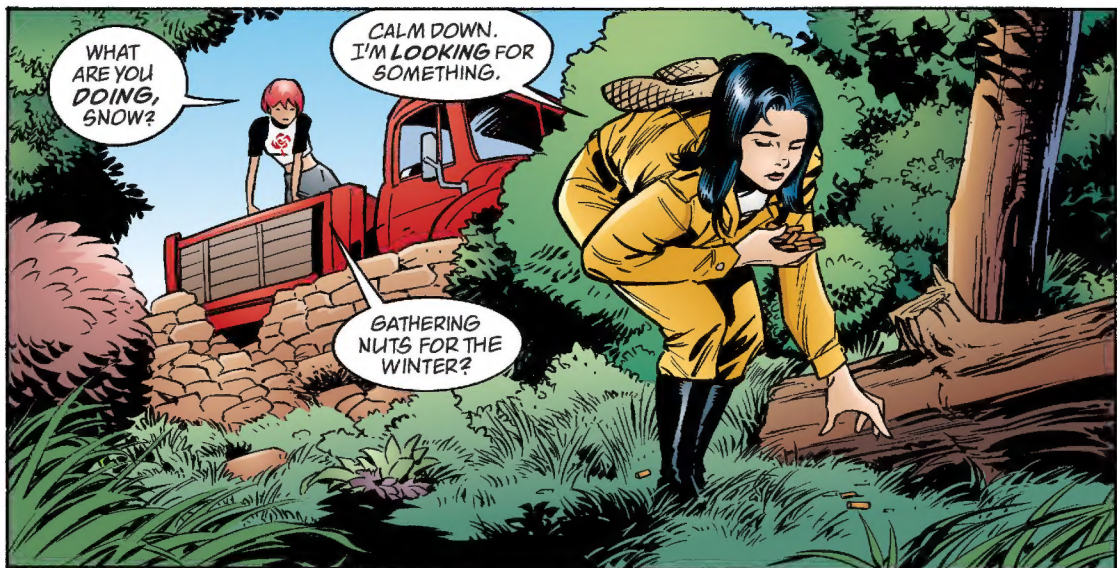


WE LIKE TO KEEP IT REMOTE UPHERE, FAR AWAY FROM PRYING EYES.

OUR STRONGEST DISTRACTION SPELLS ARE WOVEN ONTO THIS LAND TO PREVENT THE MUNDYS FROM EVEN GETTING CURIOUS ABOUT THIS AREA.



CURIOUS INDEED.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SNOW?

CALM DOWN. I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING.

GATHERING NUTS FOR THE WINTER?



CAN'T WE JUST POUR SOME BOTTLED WATER DOWN THE RADIATOR AND GO? I'M BORED ENOUGH ON THE ROAD, BUT THIS IS WORSE.

ROSE, LOOK AT THIS.

PRIVATE PROPERTY



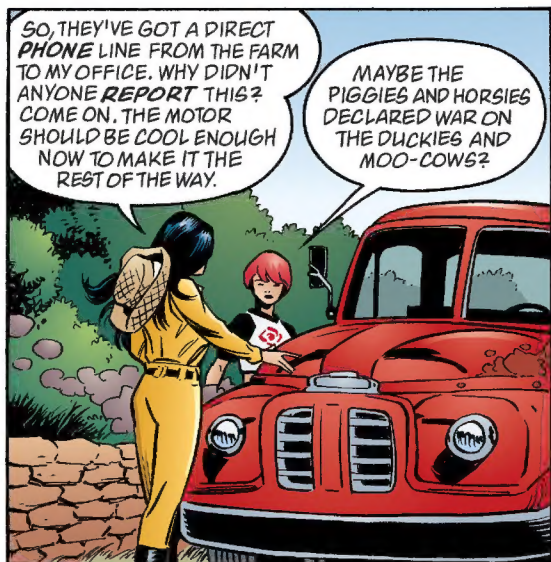
SPENT BRASS CASINGS, FROM BULLETS AND SHIT. BIG DEAL. THERE'S GOT TO BE ALL SORTS OF GUN NUTS WAY OUT HERE IN THE STICKS.

NOT HERE. ANYWHERE ELSE, BUT NEVER HERE.



THERE ARE LOTS MORE SHOTGUN SHELLS AND BULLET CASINGS SCATTERED IN THERE. BUT OUR PROTECTIVE SPELLS SHOULD BE KEEPING THE MUNDYS OUT OF OUR WOODS. AND WE'RE CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE FARM THAT ANY SHOOTING HAD TO BE OVERHEARD.

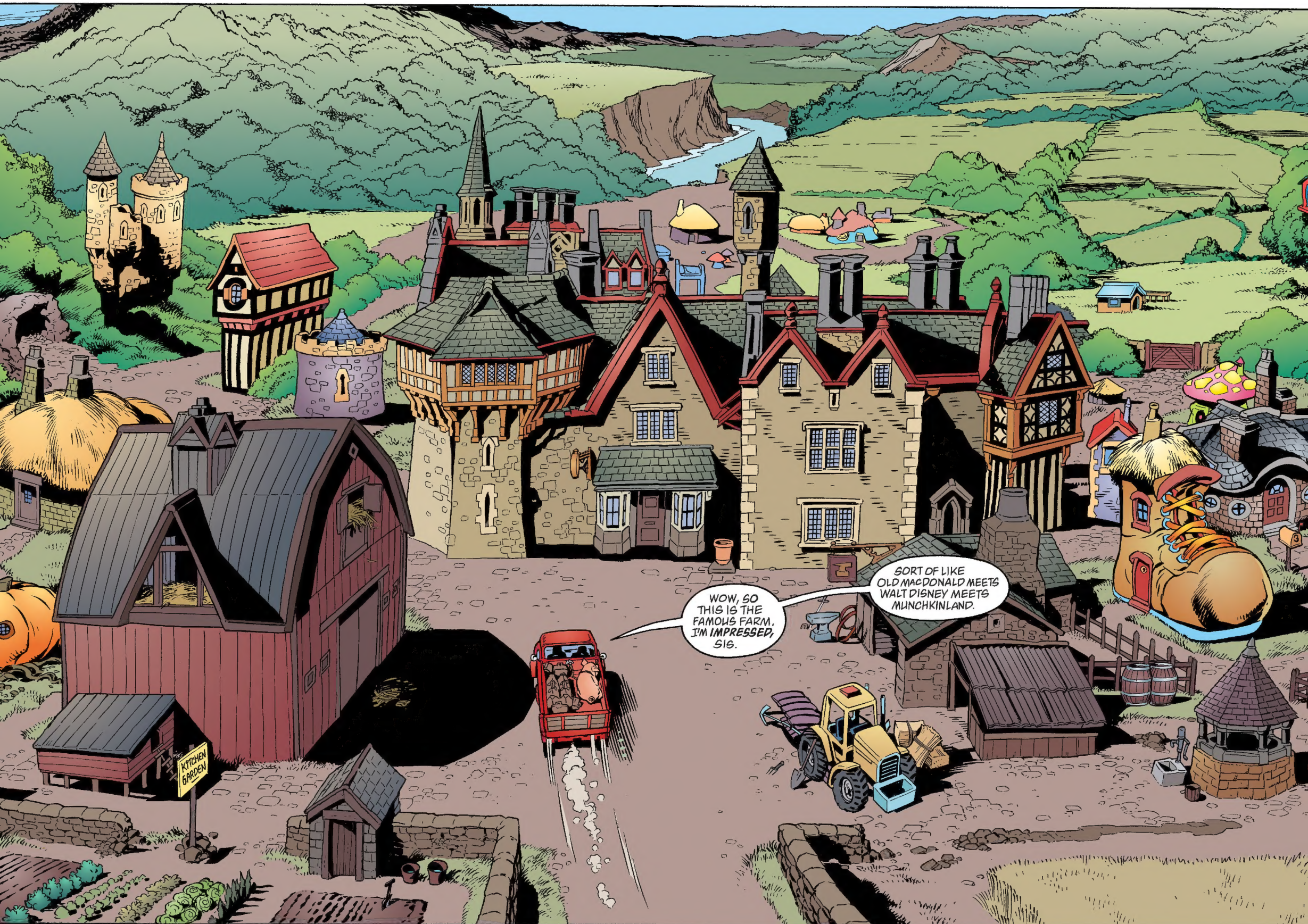
SO WHAT?



SO, THEY'VE GOT A DIRECT PHONE LINE FROM THE FARM TO MY OFFICE. WHY DIDN'T ANYONE REPORT THIS? COME ON. THE MOTOR SHOULD BE COOL ENOUGH NOW TO MAKE IT THE REST OF THE WAY.

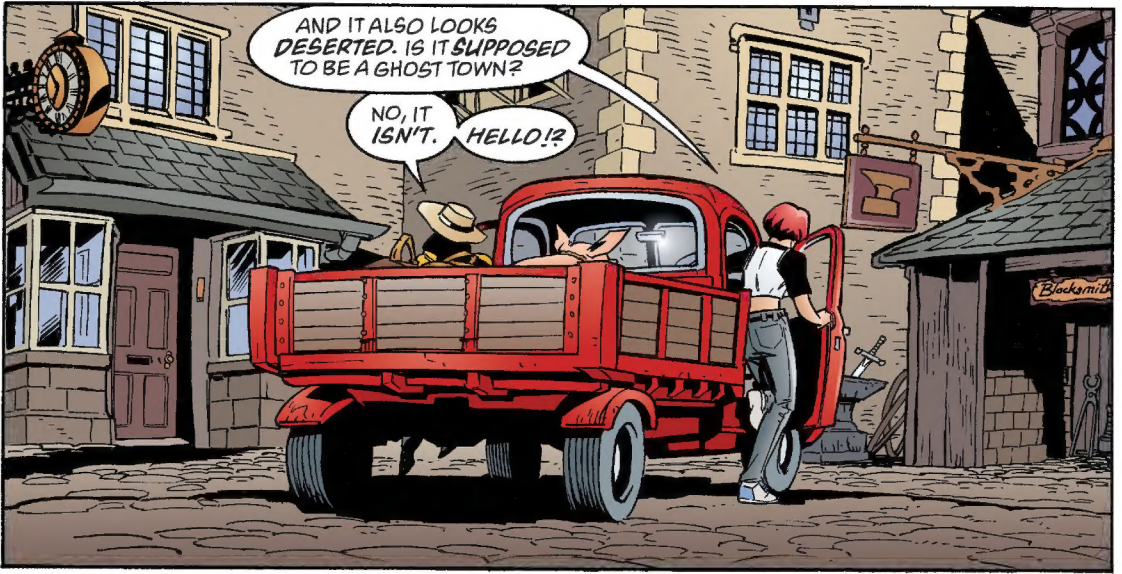
MAYBE THE PIGGIES AND HORSIES DECLARED WAR ON THE DUCKIES AND MOO-COWS?





WOW, SO THIS IS THE FAMOUS FARM. I'M IMPRESSED, SIS.

SORT OF LIKE OLD MACDONALD MEETS WALT DISNEY MEETS MUNCHKINLAND.



AND IT ALSO LOOKS DESERTED. IS IT SUPPOSED TO BE A GHOST TOWN?

NO, IT ISN'T.

HELLO!?



ARE WE THERE YET?

YES, COLIN, MY TRUE LOVE, WE ARE FINALLY "THERE YET." ONLY IT LOOKS LIKE NO ONE ELSE IS HERE ANY-MORE.

WHADDAYA MEAN?



I'M NOT SURE. APPARENTLY, EVERYONE HERE LOOKS FORWARD TO MY SISTER'S VISITS AS MUCH AS I DO.

HELLO?!

WHERE IS EVERYONE?



HOLD ON, I HEAR SOMETHING.



COME ON. I THINK I HEARD VOICES IN THE BARN.



IS ANYONE HOME?



AND FURTHERMORE, MY FELLOW GENTLESPECIES, I SAY TO YOU THE GREAT BARD'S ADMONITION TO "TAKE ARMS AGAINST A SEA OF TROUBLES" IS MORE THAN JUST A DEFT TURN OF PHRASE-- A TASTY TIDBIT OF ARTFUL SPEECH FROM A MASTER WORDSMITH. IT SHOULDN'T BE TREATED LIGHTLY, AS HOLLOW METAPHOR, BUT AS LITERAL ADVICE!

I THINK WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY RESOLVE TO...

OH MY.

UH... HELLO.

AM I INTERRUPTING SOMETHING?



RUN AWAY! RUN AWAY!  
IT'S A RAID! THE FEDS  
ARE HERE!

I WASN'T PART OF THIS!  
I WAS DUPED! I'LL TURN  
STATE'S EVIDENCE!

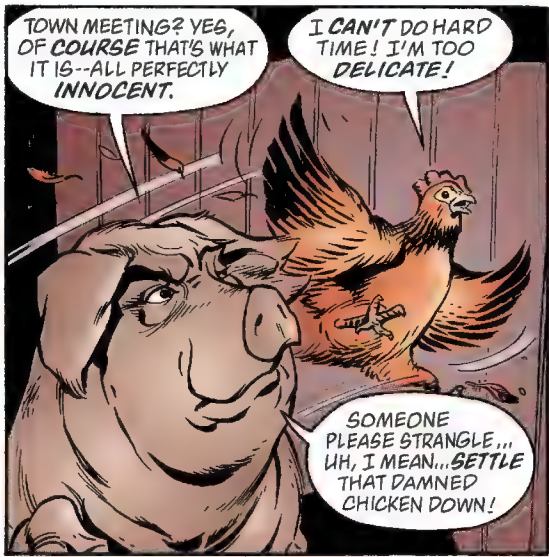
MISS  
WHITE?

WHAT  
ARE YOU  
DOING HERE,  
SO EARLY  
IN THE  
SEASON?



I TAKE IT THIS IS A  
TOWN MEETING? IF SO,  
WHY IS DUN CONDUCTING  
IT AND NOT WEYLAND  
SMITH?

DOES SOMEONE  
WANT TO EXPLAIN  
WHAT'S GOING ON  
HERE?



TOWN MEETING? YES,  
OF COURSE THAT'S WHAT  
IT IS--ALL PERFECTLY  
INNOCENT.

I CAN'T DO HARD  
TIME! I'M TOO  
DELICATE!

SOMEONE  
PLEASE STRANGLE...  
UH, I MEAN... SETTLE  
THAT DAMNED  
CHICKEN DOWN!



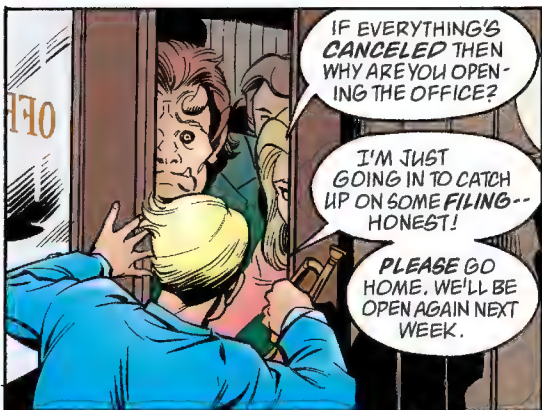
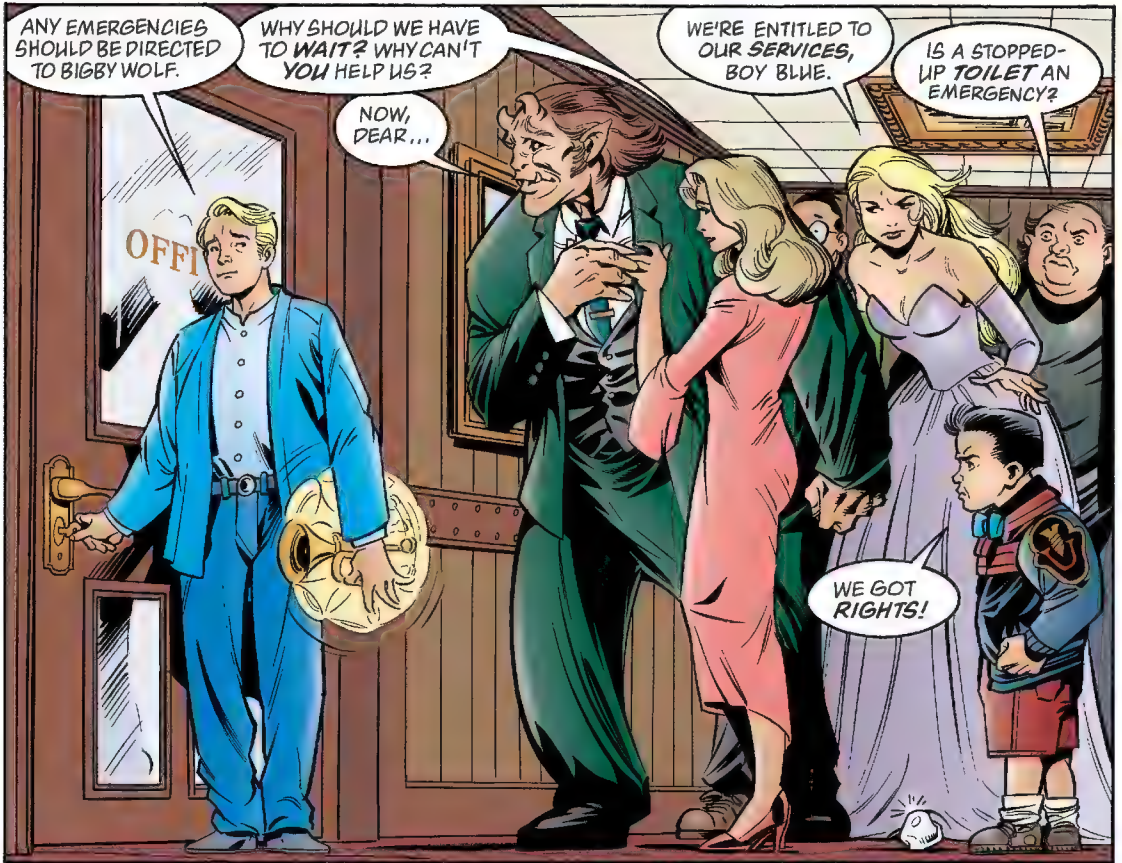
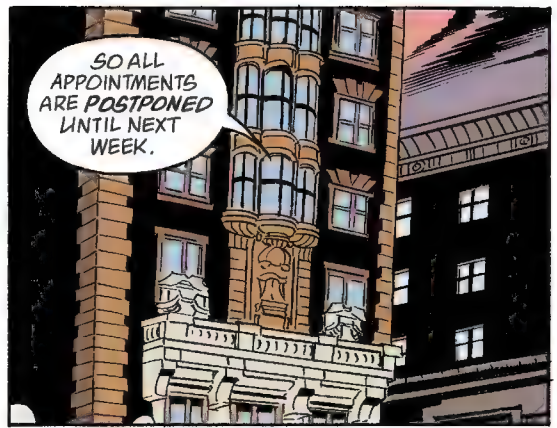
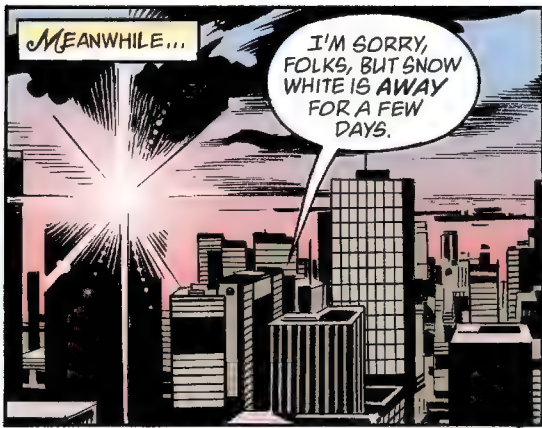
IN HONOR OF SNOW WHITE'S SURPRISE  
VISIT, I MOVE WE POSTPONE THE REMAINDER  
OF THIS MEETING, SO THAT WE CAN ALL  
MAKE HER WELCOME.

WHY? WHAT  
HAVE WE GOT TO  
HIDE?

OUT OF  
ORDER!



NONSENSE! A MOTION  
TO ADJOURN IS ALWAYS IN  
ORDER! SO I HEREBY  
DECLARE US ADJOURNED!

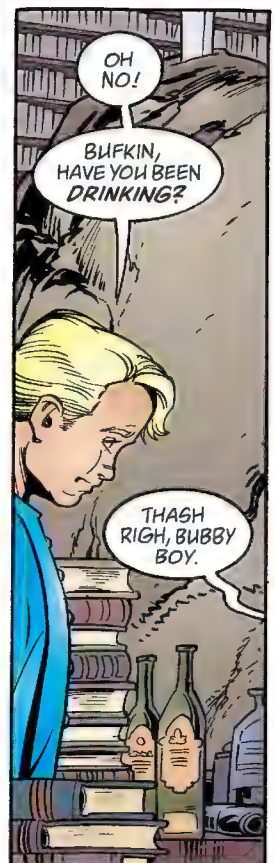




WELL, BUFKIN, I SEE THAT YOU'VE GOOFED OFF ALL DAY. YOU DIDN'T RESTACK A SINGLE BOOK.

BUFKIN?

BUFKIN!



OH NO!

BUFKIN, HAVE YOU BEEN DRINKING?

THASH RIGH, BUBBY BOY.



DAMN IT, BUFKIN!

BAD, BAD MONKEY!

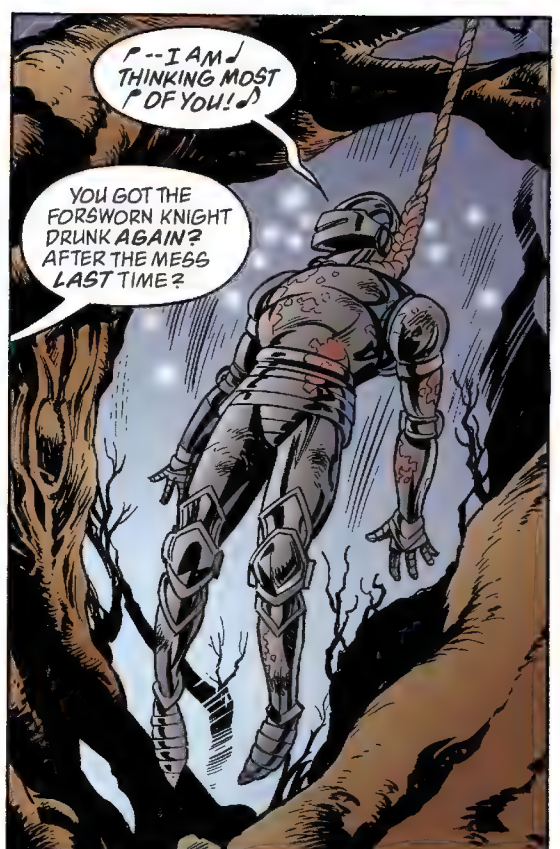
WHEN THE CATSH'S AWAY, USH MICE GOTTA PLAY.



JUST BEFORE THE BATTLE-- MOTHER--

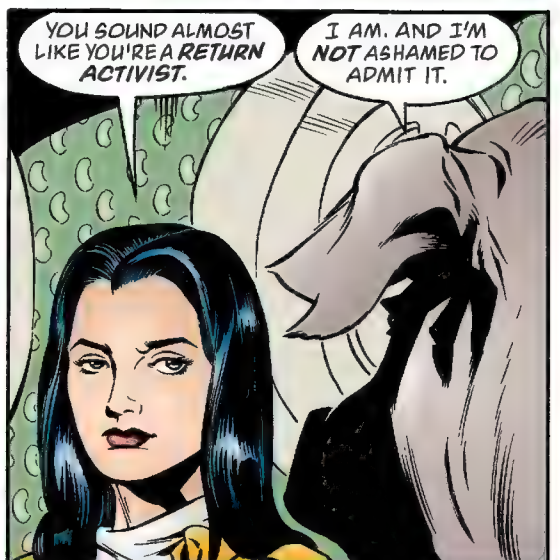
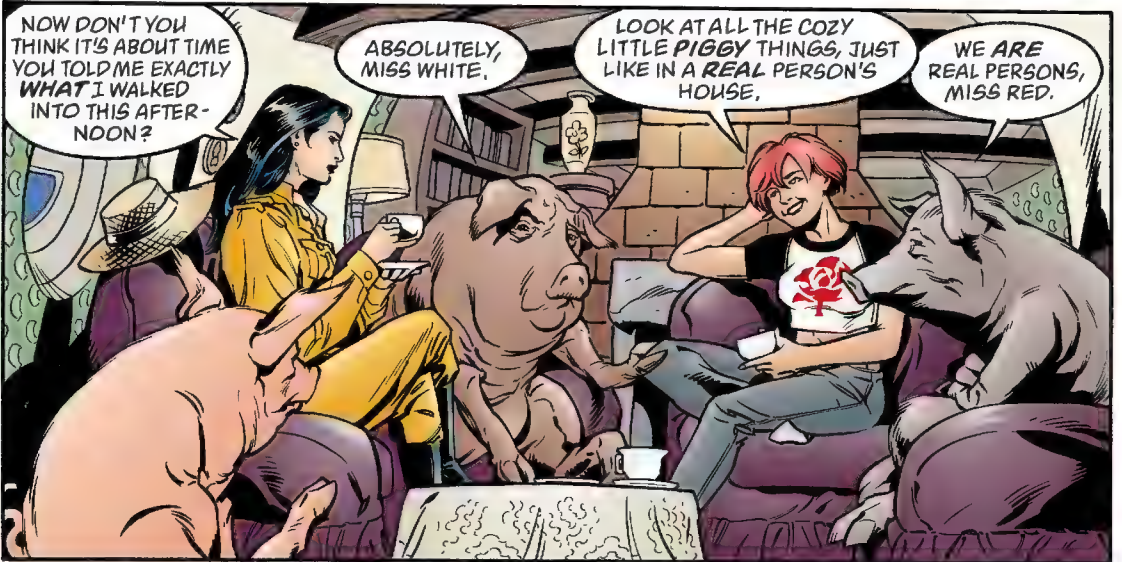
OH DEAR GOD! TELL ME YOU DIDN'T DO IT!

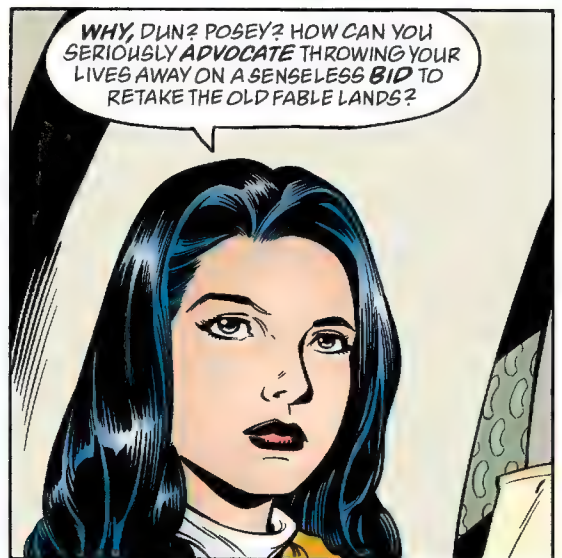
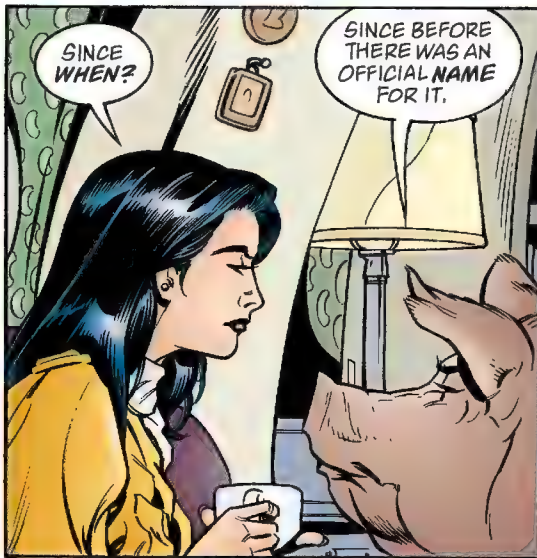
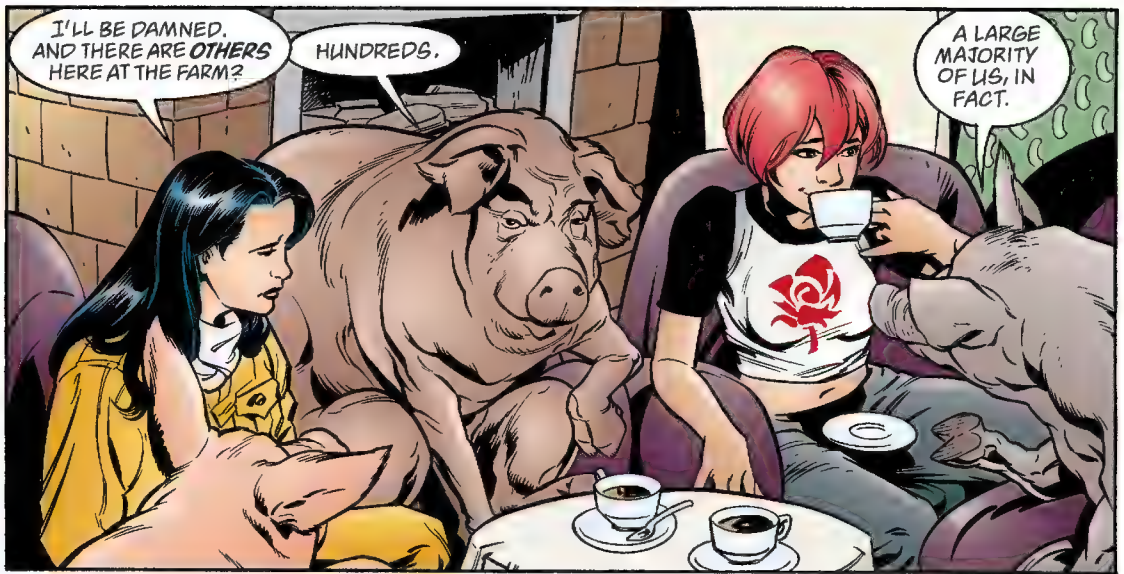
HEE HEE HEE  
HEEHEEHEE  
HEEHEEHEE  
HEE HEE!



P--I AM THINKING MOST OF YOU!

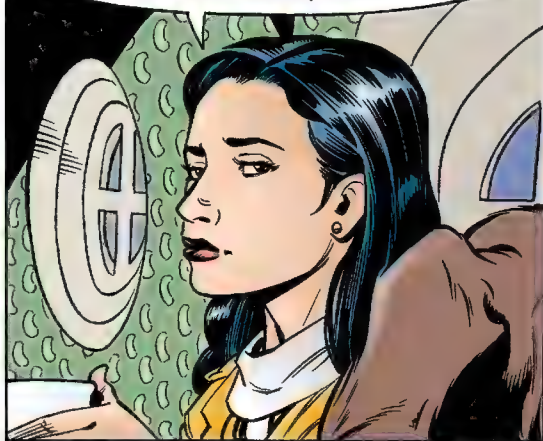
YOU GOT THE FORSWORN KNIGHT DRUNK AGAIN? AFTER THE MESS LAST TIME?







YOU'RE BOTH ACTING **RIDICULOUS**. THE FARM ISN'T A **PRISON**. IT'S A WONDERFUL, THRIVING **FABLE COMMUNITY**. NINETY CENTS OUT OF EVERY DOLLAR WE TAKE IN IS SPENT RIGHT **HERE**--TO KEEP THE FARM GOING, POSEY.

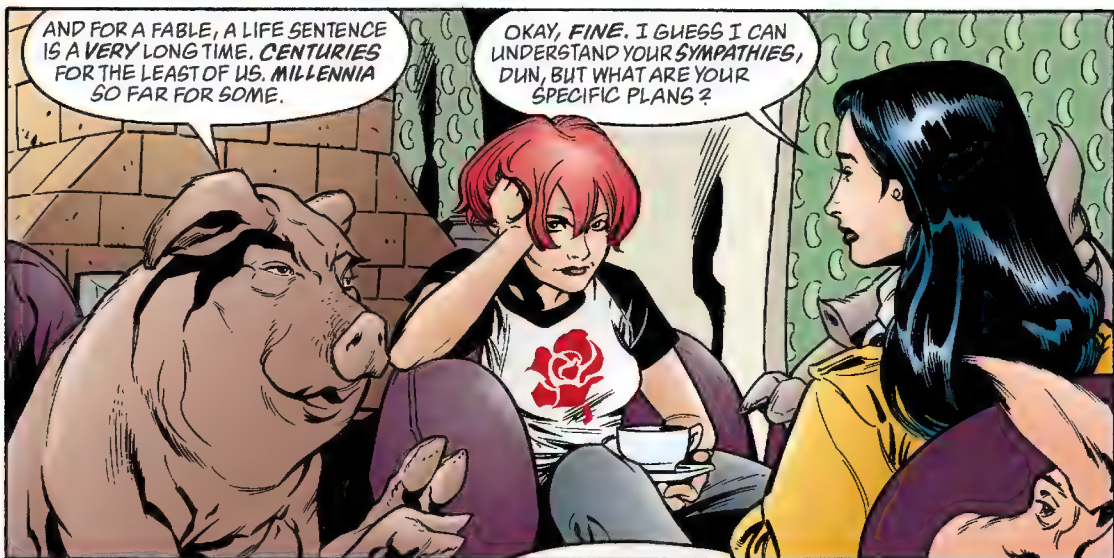


SPEND A THOUSAND TIMES MORE, SO THAT WE'RE ALL **IMMERSED** IN EVERY POSSIBLE TYPE OF **LUXURY**--TURN THIS PLACE INTO A **SYBARITE'S PARADISE**--AND IT WOULD **STILL** BE A **PRISON**, BECAUSE WE **AREN'T** ALLOWED TO **LEAVE**!



AND FOR A **FABLE**, A **LIFE SENTENCE** IS A **VERY LONG** TIME. **CENTURIES** FOR THE LEAST OF US. **MILLENNIA** SO FAR FOR SOME.

OKAY, **FINE**. I GUESS I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR **SYMPATHIES**, DUN, BUT WHAT ARE YOUR **SPECIFIC PLANS**?



WE HAVEN'T **MADE** ANY YET. THAT WOULD VIOLATE **100** MANY OF YOUR **LAWS** AND **REGULATIONS**.

THEY'RE NOT **MY** **LAWS**, THEY'RE **OUR** **LAWS**. THEY EXIST TO **KEEP** US ALL **SAFE**.

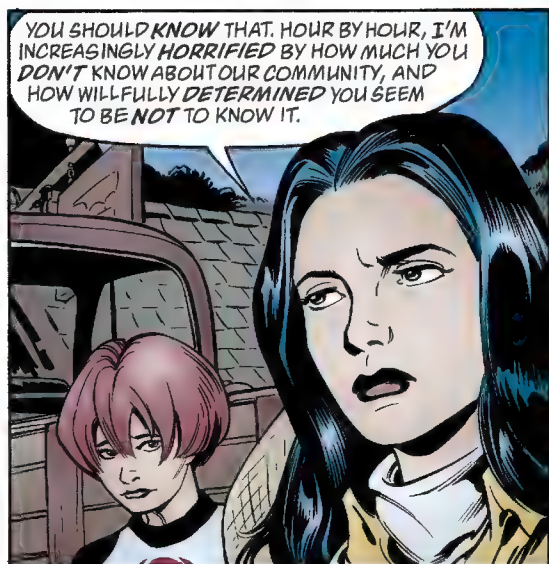


SO FAR, WE'VE ONLY TALKED ABOUT **GENERAL POLICY**, NOT **SPECIFIC STRATEGY**.

THAT'S A **RELIEF**. IT'S **LATE**. ROSE AND I ARE GOING TO **BED**. WE CAN PICK THIS UP IN THE **MORNING**.

NO, **STAY**, **LADIES**. THE **NIGHT'S** STILL **YOUNG**.

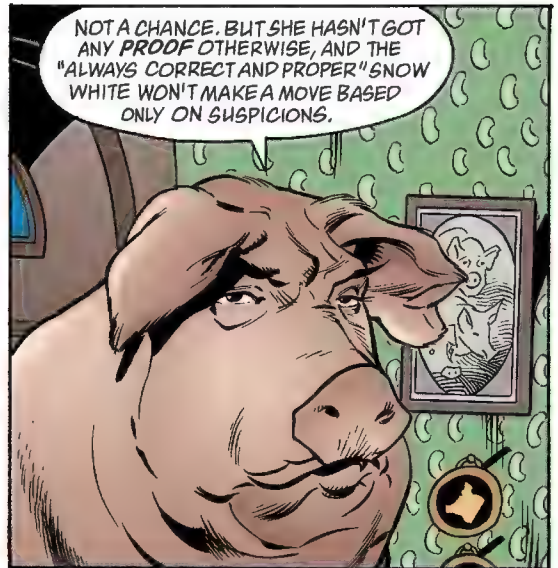




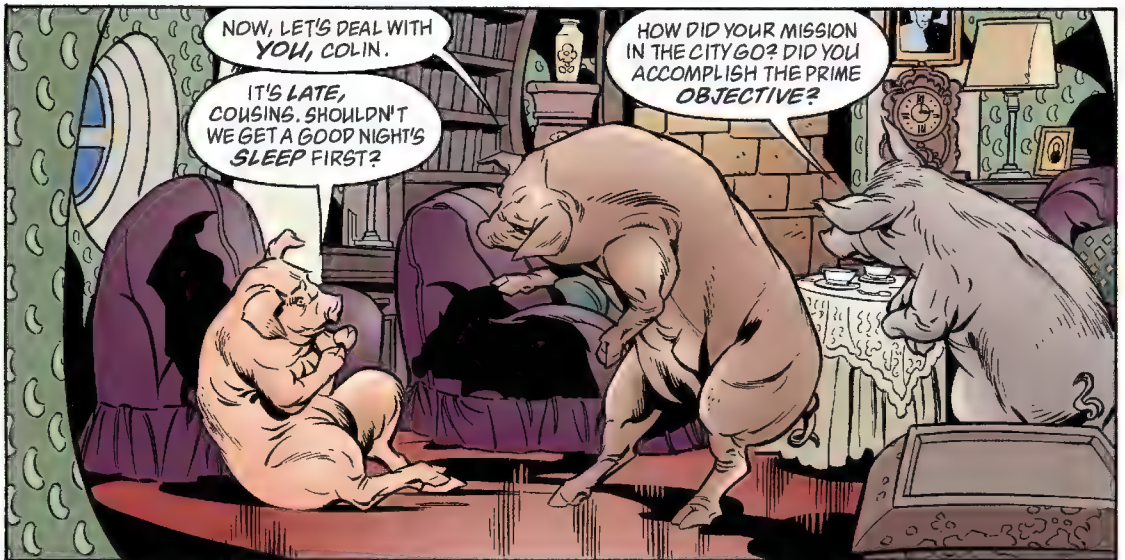


I GUESS THAT WENT ABOUT AS WELL AS COULD BE EXPECTED.

DO YOU THINK SHE BELIEVED US-- ABOUT NOT MAKING SPECIFIC PLANS YET?



NOT A CHANCE, BUT SHE HASN'T GOT ANY PROOF OTHERWISE, AND THE "ALWAYS CORRECT AND PROPER" SNOW WHITE WON'T MAKE A MOVE BASED ONLY ON SUSPICIONS.



NOW, LET'S DEAL WITH YOU, COLIN.

IT'S LATE, COUSINS. SHOULDN'T WE GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP FIRST?

HOW DID YOUR MISSION IN THE CITY GO? DID YOU ACCOMPLISH THE PRIME OBJECTIVE?



WERE YOU ABLE TO GET A DUPLICATE KEY TO THE WOODLAND BUSINESS OFFICE?

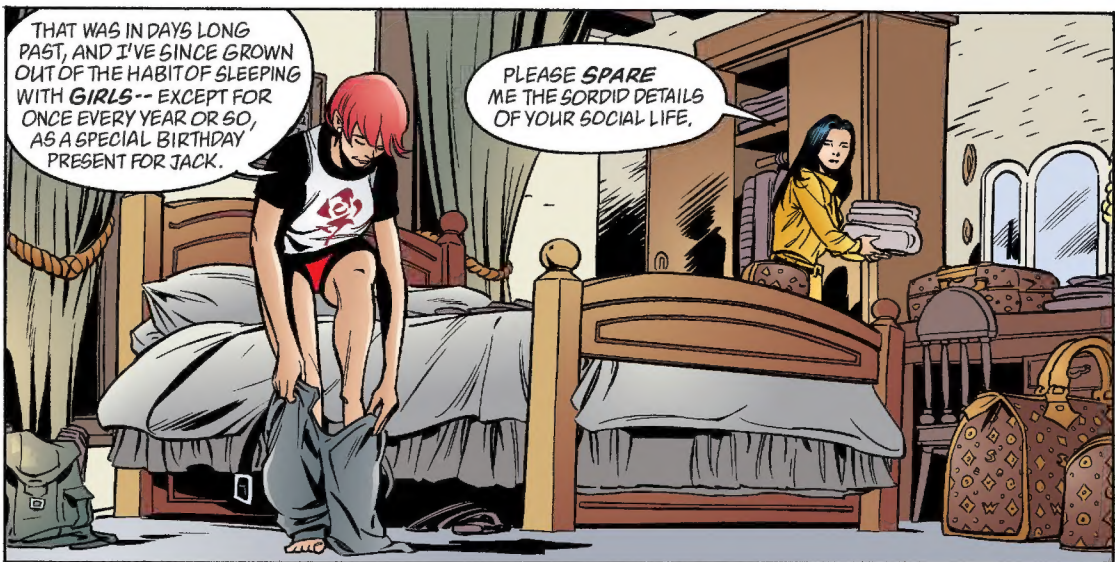
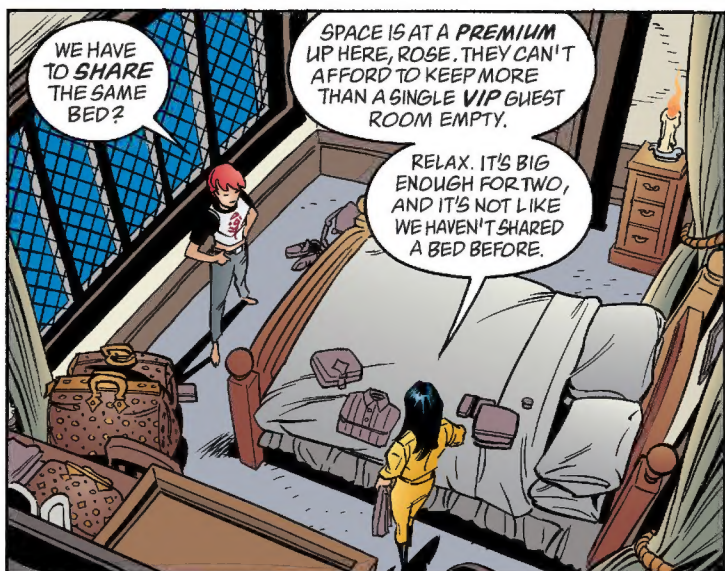
NO, NOT YET.

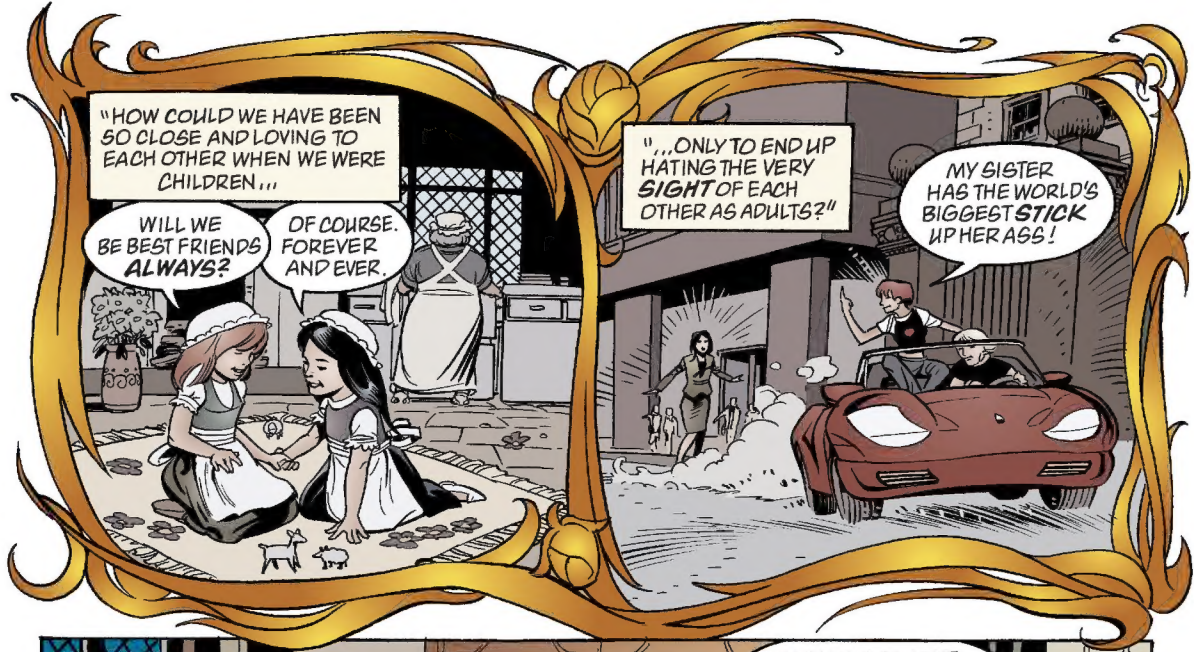


HOW MANY FABLES DID YOU FIND WHO ARE SYMPATHETIC TO OUR CAUSE? WILL ONE OF THEM COME THROUGH FOR US?



UHM ...WELL ...YOU SEE, BIGBY KEPT ME ON A PRETTY SHORT LEASH, SO I WASN'T ACTUALLY ABLE TO DO MUCH.





"HOW COULD WE HAVE BEEN SO CLOSE AND LOVING TO EACH OTHER WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN..."

WILL WE BE BEST FRIENDS ALWAYS?

OF COURSE. FOREVER AND EVER.

"...ONLY TO END UP HATING THE VERY SIGHT OF EACH OTHER AS ADULTS?"

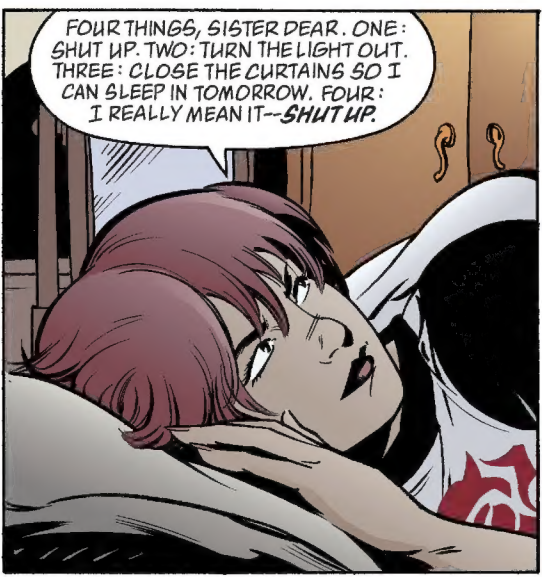
MY SISTER HAS THE WORLD'S BIGGEST STICK UP HER ASS!



WHEN DID IT GET SO UGLY BETWEEN US?

WHEN YOU CAUGHT ME IN BED WITH YOUR HUSBAND, REMEMBER?

OF COURSE I DO, BUT I THINK IT STARTED BEFORE THAT.



FOUR THINGS, SISTER DEAR. ONE: SHUT UP. TWO: TURN THE LIGHT OUT. THREE: CLOSE THE CURTAINS SO I CAN SLEEP IN TOMORROW. FOUR: I REALLY MEAN IT--SHUT UP.



FINE, WE CAN FINISH THIS IN THE --HEY, WHAT'S THAT?

WHAT'S WHAT?

THAT THING OUT THERE BY OUR TRUCK.



OH MY GOD!  
OH MY GOD! WHAT  
HAVE THEY DONE?

FUCK ME  
BLIND, I THINK  
THAT'S--OH  
NO!

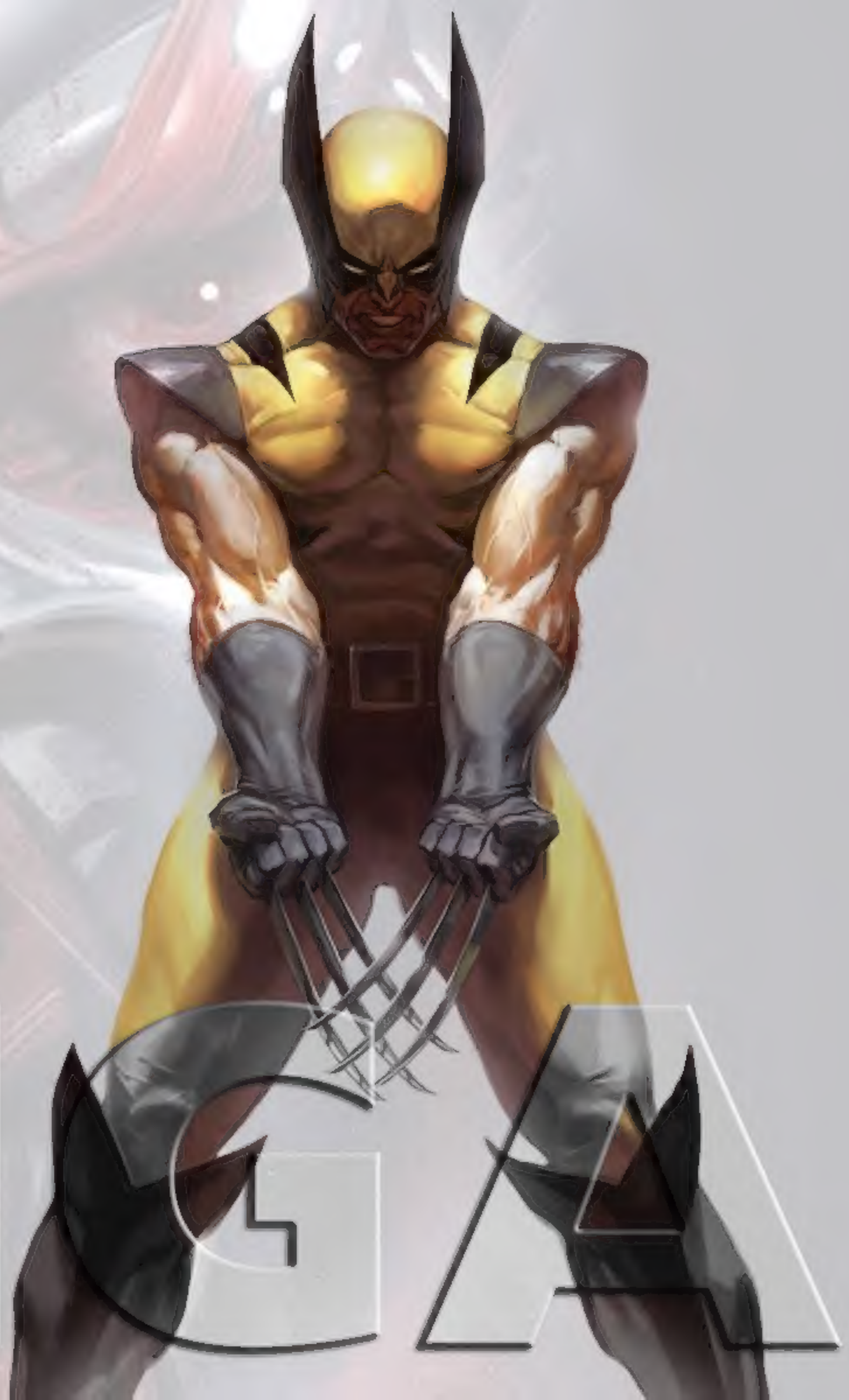


WHAT IS  
IT, ROSE?!  
WHAT IS  
IT?

IT'S POOR  
COLIN. IT ALSO  
APPEARS TO BE  
A LITERARY  
REFERENCE.

MY GUESS IS  
SOMEONE WANTED  
TO MAKE SURE WE GOT  
A VERY SPECIFIC  
MESSAGE.

NEXT:  
THE GUNS  
OF  
FABLETOWN!



NATHAN